

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/512,126
Reply to Office Action of November 7, 2006

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendment and reconsideration of the claims. Claims 1, 6-8, and 10-11 have been amended to further clarify the claimed invention. Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 2 and 3. Claims 6-8 and 10-11 have been amended to method claim format. Claims 1, 4-8, 10-11 and 14-6 will be pending upon entry of the amendment.

Claims 14-16 are newly added. Support for the new claims is found in the specification at least at page 12, lines 3-6 and lines 18-20 of the specification. Applicant submits that no new matter is added by the amended claims or the new claims.

For the reasons given below, Applicants submit that the amended and newly presented claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Oath/Declaration

A new declaration in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.67 identifying this application by application number and filing date is being filed along with this amendment.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-2, 4-8 and 10-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,578,641. Without acquiescing to the rejection and solely for the purpose of advancing prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 1 to now include the limitations of claims 1-3. The Examiner stated in the current Office Action that claim 3 would be allowable. Accordingly, claim 1 should now be allowable. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claim 1 prior to amendment, as well as the cancelled subject matter of claims 2 and 3, in a continuation application. Claims 4-5 depend from amended claim 1, and therefore also recite allowable subject matter.

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Claims 6-8 and 10-11 have been amended to an appropriate method format. Support for these amendments is disclosed at least at page 12, lines 3-6 and lines 18-20 of the specification.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited reference neither teaches nor suggests the presently claimed invention. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Objections

Claim 3 has been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would otherwise be allowed. Applicants have now amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claims 1-3. Therefore, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Summary

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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